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Organization: House of Representatives, State of Idaho

Title:

Comments: I have represented Idaho for the past eight years and I am invested in securing a cleaner environment, a stronger economy, and a brighter future for all Idahoans. To this end and with great interest, I am closely following the progress of Midas Gold Idaho's proposed Stibnite Gold Project. And after having reviewed the project's draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) I believe this project has the ability to not only improve Idaho's economy, but also significantly address the challenging environmental conditions at the site.

Previous mining in the Stibnite area left behind serious environmental degradation and problems that have upset the natural fish habitat that once thrived in the Salmon River. Midas Gold Idaho has submitted its plans with the promise of leaving the land in a better condition from what exists today. The company's detailed plan incorporates strategies to remove barriers to fish migration in order to reestablish the salmon and steelhead fish passage. Focusing on access to spawning habitat, Midas Gold Idaho will create lasting improvements for wildlife in our rivers.

The Stibnite Gold Project will also be a boon to the state and regional economy. The company has committed to focusing on hiring from Idaho for the nearly 1,000 construction, operation, and reclamation jobs expected at the site. Additionally, an independent economic study found that over the project's duration, it would create nearly \$151 million in state and local tax revenues. The same study found that local schools and law enforcement would see \$300,000 annually from increased property taxes. These economic benefits have the ability to improve the everyday life of our residents, ensure improvements in our children's education, and provide for a bright future for Idaho.

This is the type of project our state needs and I am encouraged to see the release of draft EIS by the U.S. Forest Service and urge you to allow this project to move forward with Alternative 2.